178 The present emperor, since his ascendancy in 1917 and particularly since his return from exile in 1941, has proceeded to build a base for the modernisation of his country through the creation of a modern-educated new elite. The only portfolio he holds personally in his own cabinet is that of Minister of Education (though the other ministers ask his guidance on often the most minute matters). It is this group which is beginning to bridge the gulf between the ethnic cleavages, and which is trying to enlarge Amhara loyalty to an Ethiopian nationalism. Its members give lip service to the still powerful Coptic church: they smoke publicly, but they will break the lenten fast only in secret, eat pork only when not in the public eye, and still refrain from walking arm-in-arm with a female in public. But when sent to the provinces to modernise the administration, they quietly make gradual but cumulative inroads against the temporal power of the church and against the feudal landowning gentry, on the basis of imperial proclamations and numerous directives. (Footnote 138)

643 178 779 This change is only in the initial stages. Some of the most fundamental decisions by the present emperor, notably the abolition of the "gabbar" (serf-like) system, and the measurement and registration of the land, have been most strongly resisted in the old-Amhara provinces, where these edicts have still not been enforced.

As a result, the emperor has often tried to proceed by indirect means. Just as he has utilised the foreign missionaries in his Amharisation program, so has he tried to utilise the Abyssinian clergy in his modernisation program. He has appointed an Egyptian Coptic clergyman-educator to head the new Theological College of

Footnote 138: For details see: Messing, Simon D.: Changing Ethiopia (in) The Middle East Journal, vol.9, no.4, Autumn 1955, pp. 413-432.

643 Emperor Haile Selassie I in 1931 and 1955.

His "Solomonic Dynasty" claims descent from the Biblical Queen of Sheba, known to Abyssinian tradition as "Makeda", or "Azeb", and her son, Menelik I. The proper reference to the emperor is "Atse", to the empress, "Itege" (lit. Master, Mistress, i.e., of the country), used before the name. If no name follows the designation, the title "Jan" is used (possibly from the Geez "dayyana", he judges, or from the Cushitic "zehon", elephant, king of beasts). In address, the appelation used for the emperor is "Germawi hoy!" (Oh, Magnificence), formerly "Jan hoy!" (Oh, Elephant).

645 The Council of Elders, "shelot", referred to in village and town, also applies to the Crown Council of State. It consists, in addition to the emperor, of the Abuna, the archbishop of the State; those "ras" who have survived the centralization of recent years, notably the conservative kinsman of the emperor, Ras Kassa, and his liberal kinsman, Ras Imru; the powerful, reputedly chauvinistic, Minister of the Pen, Wolde Giyorgis; and several cabinet Ministers included more for decoration than expected contributions. Next to the emperor himself, this is the highest policy-making body at present, dominating, on important issues, the legislative, judicial and executive framework of the bicameral Parliament and cabinet. Serious problems discussed in the Crown Council have ranged from disaffection in high places, to the question of whether or not the old Geez-Amharic alphabet of 276 and more syllables should be simplified

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11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

recent restrictions on their income, it remains considerable. It is conservatively estimated that they possess at least fifteen per cent of the arable land in Ethiopia, and their general inertia with regard to agricultural reform remains a significant conservative factor.

In the modernizing sector, the position of the clergy has been much more vulnerable. The traditional forms of erudition and piety seem to bear little relevance to the intellectual and moral needs of the modernizing elements. The church's reputation for hostility to change further alienates them from it. But it is by no means certain that the church's position will only decline with the passage of time. Ethiopia will be profoundly susceptible to the appeal of traditional revivalist sentiment as the strains attendant on modernization increase; and by its publication of two monthlies, since 1947, the church has already shown, albeit in a limited way, its capacity to employ modern media for traditionalist purposes. On the other hand, if the tiny band of Western-educated church leaders succeed in promoting some degree of modernization in the church, through institutions like the Theological School and the Orthodox Students Association, the clergy may yet play a constructive part in the social and moral life of transitional Ethiopia. It remains to be seen whether its leadership will be effective enough to move the traditionalist clergy to make those adjustments necessary for survival as a respected status group in the modernizing sector.

The New Men of Power

After curbing the independent power of the *makuānnent*, Haile Selassie was careful to prevent others from taking their place in the political structure, determined as he was to consolidate in his own hand all the powers they once wielded. As a result of his centralization of government in Addis Ababa, however, a new group of men have gained pre-eminent status at the national level. We may call this group the "new nobility": "new" because of their development of an urban style of life, and because their influence as an elite is largely directed to the modernizing infrastructure, and "nobility" because of their perpetuation of the traditional hierarchical image of a superior and privileged status group. The core of this status group consists of government officials with the ranks of minister, vice-minister, and assistant minister, who function essentially as a personal administrative staff for the monarch.

As observed above, Tēwodros clearly saw the need for creating a new class of nobles, freed from regional interests and acting solely according to the

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elementary instructors in the government schools, and at salaries much lower than the better trained Ministry teachers. The presence of just one or two priests in these schools would eliminate the traditionalist opposition to them that is now so strong. The situation may be compared to that in Ceylon, where the opposition of Buddhist monks to government schools was eliminated by incorporating them as teachers in those schools.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

175 178 665 642 645 royal will. A solid foundation for such a class was not possible, however, until the central government had been sufficiently stabilized and expanded. These conditions began to be met under Menelik, who established Addis Ababa in the last decade of the nineteenth century and in 1907 created a number of ministries. Housed in buildings inside the palace compound, the ministries were initially regarded as little more than an ornament to dress up the imperial court. Although men of some stature, like Afa Negus Nasibu and Fitāwrāri Hābta Giyorgis, were named to the posts, the offices themselves did not acquire much prestige. It was no great matter when, five years after the death of Menelik, the ministers were turned out of office by a group of military officers at the instigation of Rās Tafari and sent home to their provincial estates.

175 178 645 647 [652] After becoming emperor himself, however, Haile Selassie revived and enlarged the ministerial system. Since the restoration, it has expanded into a complex bureaucratic structure. In addition to some sixteen ministries, a number of specialized government agencies have been formed, and the military and judicial hierarchies and the diplomatic corps have been considerably expanded. The rapid growth of the central government in the past two decades is reflected in its budgetary expenditures, which went from about US$10 million in 1942 to an estimated US$110 million in 1962.

178 647 571 554 565 The growth of this governmental machinery has provided a new basis for elite status in Ethiopia. Mobility channels now run in terms of appointments in the government bureaucracy. The periodic announcement of appointments by the Emperor has become the focus of public interest in Ethiopia since the liberation. Every new list of appointments provides the occasion for intense gossip and *de rigueur* congratulatory parties at the homes of the favored.

178 565 571 The new class of high governmental functionaries under Haile Selassie may be regarded as a transitional elite: partly traditional, partly modernizing. With regard to basis of recruitment, values represented, and style of life, the new nobility present, on the one hand, a direct continuation of the old nobility; and, on the other hand, many features novel in Abyssinian society.

178 565 [646] To some extent recruitment of members of the new nobility was not a creation of new dignitaries, but rather an absorption of members of the old nobility into the new political organization. The recruitment of *makuānnent* into the senate, which after all is an organ of the central government, may be taken as an ambiguous instance of this. Some others were given important posts in the civil and military administrations. These include members of the princely families of Shoa, Tigre, Wag, Lasta, and Gojjam; the Bakere clan, royalty from the Galla province of Wallaga; and scions of the *makuānnent* who were important in Menelik's day or before, members of aristocratic clans which go by the names of Bēzā, Mojā, Sofanē, and Addisgē. Such persons are likely to have been awarded the old military titles for purely honorific pur-